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OCI No. 2327/65

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Office of Current Intelligence
29 September 1965

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

Indonesia's Efforts to Acquire
an Atomic Bomb

1. President Sukarno's major ambition for the moment appears to be the detonation of an atomic bomb on Indonesian territory. Apparently he hopes to persuade Communist China either to give Indonesia a bomb or to assist Indonesia to produce its own atomic device. Over the past several months there have been sundry reports on Sino-Indonesian cooperation in this field, but many of these reports have already been proved false.

2. Indonesia lacks the capability to build an atomic device itself. Since November 1964, however, and particularly since July, various Indonesian officials have publicly alluded to their intentions or capabilities to produce one. These vary from Sukarno's statement in July that "God willing, in the near future we will make our own atomic bombs," to the claim by the army logistics director that there would be a detonation in November of this year.

3. Siwabessy, now in Tokyo for the International Atomic Energy Association (IAEA) general conference, has told the press that Indonesia is negotiating a nuclear research agreement with Communist China. He gave no details of the agreement, but said Indonesia would be able

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NO CHANGE IN CLASS. 1
1. DECLASSIFIED
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AUTH: HR 70-2

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to build its own reactors by 1970. He also stated that his country would place "emphasis on raw materials such as uranium and thorium."

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5. It is possible that Djakarta has misconstrued Chinese statements of general support in this field as a relatively firm commitment. It is also possible that Sukarno believes that by sheer persistence he can gain major assistance from China for an atomic project.

6. Peking, however, is most unlikely to agree to provide either a nuclear device or any substantial amount of assistance to enable Indonesia to develop its own nuclear weapons capability. Although Djakarta and Peking have a large and growing area of mutual interest and have cooperated to achieve specific short-term political objectives, for the long run Peking distrusts Sukarno. Moreover, the Chinese are not so confident of an immediate Communist takeover following Sukarno's death as to take the risk of providing a nuclear capability to a possible non-Communist successor regime.

7. Peking operates under almost fanatical security procedures and would be most reluctant to permit one of its nuclear devices or even Chinese nuclear technology to leave the country, where it would be much more difficult to safeguard.

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8. While some of the above problems might be minimized by having the device kept at all times in the custody of Chinese personnel, it seems unlikely that Peking would be willing to build up the prestige, to say nothing of the power, of a potential rival to China in Southeast Asia.

9. The Chinese, moreover, have only a limited supply of fissionable material at present, and would be very unlikely to expend some of their stock at a site where they would be unable to obtain the maximum amount of technical data of military value.

10. We have no evidence of an unusual influx of Chinese into Indonesia or of preparation of a nuclear test site there. We would expect to detect such preparations if they were underway.

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